

5 FAH-8 H-440 IMAGES

(CT:WEB-1; 09-29-2005)
(Office of Origin: IRM/BPC/RG)

5 FAH-8 H-441 FORMATS

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- a. Graphics used on Web sites need to be compressed or reduced in size to download in a reasonable amount of time. The two standard compression formats are graphic interchange format (GIF) and joint photographic experts group (JPEG) with a third, portable network graphics (PNG), gaining increased acceptance. Those formats addressed in this handbook are the most common but not the only formats available for use. The format you choose will depend on the type of image, the desired file size, and how you want it to be displayed. If, after selecting an image format, the quality of your image does not meet your expectations, try another format. The goal is to produce images that fulfill the objectives of the Web page, not necessarily the smallest file size, most number of colors, or other image characteristic.
- b. When selecting images to use on a Web site, Department of State offices must conform to copyright laws.

5 FAH-8 H-441.1 Graphic Interchange Format - .gif

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- a. Graphic Interchange Format (GIF) works well with flat color fields that are well defined such as clip art and diagrams. GIF files are limited to 256 discrete colors but attempt to display additional hues by "dithering" or mixing pixels of two or more colors.
- b. The GIF format is interlaced. Viewers can get an impression of the finished image from the rough first layer and if interested, watch as the second and third layers are added to complete the picture. GIF files can be made transparent so the background of the Web site will not be obscured by anything other than the image itself.

5 FAH-8 H-441.2 Joint Photographic Experts Group - .jpeg

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- a. Joint Photographic Experts Group (JPEG) is usually best for photographs and graphics with lots of color fields. It does a good job of displaying complex color fields that blend and fade into each other.
- b. JPEG has a higher compression factor that will result in smaller files. The JPEG image is drawn as a finished picture from top to bottom requiring the viewer to wait until it is finished to see what is displayed.

5 FAH-8 H-441.3 Portable Network Graphics - .png

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- a. Portable Network Graphics (PNG) was developed as an alternative to GIF. It has a variable transparency capability and better compression than GIF. PNG supports the two JPEG image types, truecolor and grayscale, and the GIF image type, palette-based or 8-bit. The greatest advantage of PNG is the portability feature that is achieved by a single method of implementation regardless of platform.
- b. Even though PNG will support truecolor, JPEG is usually the better choice for finished truecolor images such as photographs and diagrams.

5 FAH-8 H-441.4 Bitmap - .bmp

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- a. The bitmapped graphics format is the default for saving images in Microsoft applications. An example is using the <CTRL><PRINT SCREEN> keys to capture an image of the current display.
- b. Normally, bitmapped images are not compressed and the resulting image files will be significantly larger than compressed file formats. BMP files are not suitable for Web sites due to the time required to transfer the large files and should be avoided on Department of State Web sites.

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